

# Friday Church News Notes

## Southeastern Seminary Professor Says Abusing Environment is Like Tearing Pages From Bible

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Jonathan Merritt, a student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, told the press recently that one of his professors made the statement “that when we destroy creation, which is God’s revelation, it is no different than tearing a page out of the Bible” (“Baptists: No Change on Climate Change,” *WorldNetDaily*, March 13, 2008). Merritt said that this statement inspired him to launch a campaign to produce a stronger action within the Southern Baptist Convention against climate change. What I found interesting is not this misguided seminarian’s actions but the fact that he was inspired by a heretical statement by one of his professors (who he did not name). Scripture does say that God speaks through creation, that it is a light to mankind (Romans 1:20; Psalm 19:1-6). But it nowhere likens creation to the Bible or even hints that to destroy creation would be like ripping pages from the Bible. That is truly preposterous. Further, to say that if we don’t buy into the mythical global warming frenzy that we are destroying creation and/or sinning against God is even more preposterous. What Merritt needs to do is get busy doing what Jesus Christ told us to do, which is “preach the gospel to every creature,” and that does not mean the trees! And what Southeastern Seminary needs to do is find out that teacher’s name and fire him.



## HE WHO IS SILENT IS UNDERSTOOD TO CONSENT

“He who is silent is understood to consent” is an ancient principle of the Roman Catholic Church. The Latin expression is “*Qui tacet consentire videtur.*” It was one of the tools of trade whereby Rome foisted its Inquisition upon multitudes in the dark ages. She created a climate of fear in which to speak out was costly, then dared anyone to speak out and used the resulting silence as justification for its crimes, arguing, “The people haven’t said anything against us; they obviously consent.” It is still costly to speak out against Rome, though the price is not usually as high today as it once was. The cost today is the vicious words of her

defenders, the persistent nagging of those who don’t understand your point, the loss of reputation and influence, extreme narrowing of the size of one’s ministry, slander and backbiting, and other such things. The cost is high enough that very few are speaking out! And again Rome pretends that the silence indicates consent, and her wickedness is allowed to go on apace with hardly any interference. How is it with you, dear brother preacher? Have you been cowed into silence on the important issues facing the churches today, such as Romanism, ecumenism, and worldlyism? Remember the words

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## THE POVERTY AND JUSTICE BIBLE

The following is excerpted from “Keep Your Green Thumb Off My Bible” by Bob Burney, March 5, 2008: “The Bible Society of the United Kingdom has announced its newest addition to avalanche of specialty Bibles we’ve seen in recent years -- *The Poverty and Justice Bible*. ... The ‘Poverty and Justice Bible’ emphasizes the “over 2,000 verses that spell out God’s attitude to poverty and justice.” ... Each poverty passage has its own study guide complete with a ‘Discover,’ ‘Dream’ and ‘Do’ portion. ... When you study Romans 13:8-10, the ‘Discover’ section of the study guide declares, ‘Paul was a great traveler. It is estimated that he traveled more than 10,000 miles during his ministry. I wonder, if he were alive today, would he be zooming around Turkey on the Asia Minor equivalent of EasyJet? Would he be insulating his tent and reducing his carbon footprint?’ I’m not making this up. Do you remember the last time you closed your Bible and meditated on how much insulation Paul should have put in his tent? ... Page after page of ‘application’ condemns chain saws, deforestation, clear cutting and all things not ‘green.’ ... When you turn in your new PJB to Amos 5:21-24 you will be challenged to a deeper walk with Christ when you read this ‘Do’ portion of the study guide: ‘Cultivate a relationship with your garden (or window box). Show it you care.’ Can somebody tell me how I show my window box that I care?”



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of Rome, “He who is silent is understood to consent.” Interestingly, God sees it that way, too. He says, “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke” (2 Tim. 4:2), and, “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:12), and, “These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority” (Titus 2:12). The preacher that keeps his mouth shut in the face of error is in open disobedience to God’s commands and is assisting the devil’s program by his awful silence.



## Emerging Church Leader Denies Substitutionary Atonement and Hell

In a January 2006 interview with Leif Hansen, emerging church leader Brian McLaren said that the doctrine of Substitutionary Atonement makes God into a strange monster that wants to kill his own son and needs to be restrained. He further says that if the doctrine of hell is true, then the Christ’s message and the cross are “false advertising.” He also said that if hell is true then people can legitimately question God’s goodness. He even blasphemously mocks the Atonement by saying that if it is true it would mean that God can’t forgive one person unless he “kicks someone else.” Consider a couple of excerpts: “We have a vision that the real problem is God wants to kill us all. And we’ve got to somehow solve that problem. ... Does it make sense for a good being to create creatures who will experience infinite torture, infinite time, infinite—you know, never be numbed in their consciousness? I mean, how would you even create a universe where that sort of thing could happen? It just sounds--It really raises

some questions about the goodness of God” (McLaren, <http://www.understandthetimes.org/mclarentrans.shtml> and [http://str.typepad.com/weblog/2006/01/brian\\_mclaren\\_p.html](http://str.typepad.com/weblog/2006/01/brian_mclaren_p.html)). This interview is truly amazing in a fearful way. Hansen says that he doubts God’s very existence and even casts a profanity at Jesus. And yet the two of them ramble on in a knowing sort of way, mocking fundamentalists and Calvinists and anyone else who won’t buy into the emerging church’s unbelief. It is a great warning that if you reject the truth you are walking in utter darkness. What McLaren ignores is God’s holiness. He is a holy and just God who has given man a holy Law. That Law must be satisfied. The wages of sin is death, and without the shedding of blood is no remission. But the satisfaction of God’s law is not something that man has to do; it is something God, in His amazing love, has already done through His own Son.

## Luis Palau Yokes Together with Catholic Church Again

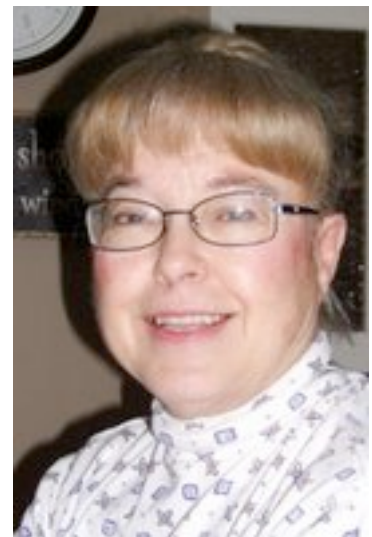
Popular Evangelist Luis Palau is an ecumenist like Billy Graham, sending his “converts” back to any type of church and refusing to warn his listeners plainly of false teachers. His July 2007 crusade in Omaha, Nebraska, was endorsed by Catholic Archbishop Elden Curtiss. Not only did the Catholic archbishop address the crowd personally, but the Catholics were allowed to put up a tent at the entrance to the venue to distribute rosaries and Catholic material and priests greeted the people as they entered the crusade grounds (*Catholic Voice*, Archdiocese of Omaha, Aug. 10, 2007). Each participant filled out a card indicating religious background, and all of the cards stating Catholic were given to the Catholic churches for follow up (*Catholic Voice*, June 8, 2007). Thus it appears that Rome did more “evangelizing” at that event than Palau did! Catholic participation in Palau crusades is not something new. As early as 1975 Roman Catholic churches were participating (*Christianity Today* for Dec. 19, 1975). In 1986 Palau told Fundamental Evangelistic Association reporter Dennis Costella that he had plans for more extensive Catholic involvement in his future crusades (*Foundation* magazine, Jul.-Aug. 1986). In 1992 a Phoenix, Arizona, newspaper reported: “[Palau] carefully avoids the controversial differences between Catholics and Protestants. ... Bible studies are deliberately held at times that would not conflict with Masses and controversial subjects like the Virgin Mary are avoided” (*The Arizona Republic*, October 31, 1992). I say shame on him! Roman

Catholics were involved in Palau crusades in New Zealand in 1987 (a Catholic bishop was on the advisory board), in Jamaica in 1993, in Michigan in 1994, in Ireland in 1995, in Chicago in 1996, and in Olympia, Washington, in 1998.



## CANADA SHUTS DOWN APOLOGETICS MINISTRY

The following is excerpted from “Canada Orders Ministry by Christians Shut Down,” *WorldNetDaily*, March 21, 2008: “The Canadian government has ordered a Christian ministry that teaches doctrine and the differences between Christians and cults shut down because its reference materials were ‘critical’ of the beliefs of those who are not Christian, WND has learned. So what used to be called MacGregor Ministries with offerings in how to recognize and eliminate ‘faulty fads’ in Christian churches has been re-created in the United States, and now operates under the name MM Outreach Media Ministries. Lorri MacGregor, who has dedicated her life to explaining the straight and narrow of Christian beliefs since she found her way out of the Jehovah’s Witness system years ago, told WND Canada’s version of a ‘hate crimes’ law prevented their work from continuing as it had for nearly 30 years. ... The ministry was ordered to either make wholesale changes in its presentations, or shut down. [They were required to say that all religions are equal, stop publishing their magazine on cults, remove their website and stop selling any products teaching about cults.] MacGregor said, ‘We could not live under those restrictions.’ ... WND previously has reported how proposals are being made in Canada to raise taxes and fees on churches dramatically, as well as ban them from meeting in some locations. WND also has reported on how many Biblical standards of behavior are under attack by the ‘bastardized courts’ of Canada, where activists who claim they have ‘hurt feelings’ are demanding--and getting--penalties imposed against those who oppose the homosexual lifestyle. It also has reported on the times that ‘hate crimes’ legislation for the United States has been considered in Congress.”



## QUICK PRAYERISM NOT ONLY AN INDEPENDENT BAPTIST PROBLEM

We have often warned about the error of what we call "Quick Prayerism." It is the "one, two, three, pray after me" program. It is a method of soul winning that is quick to present a brief little gospel plan, quick to get people to pray a sinner's prayer even when there is no evidence that they are even more than mildly interested and when there is *no* evidence of repentance, quick to give them "assurance" even when there is no evidence that they have been born again, and quick to count them in soul winning statistics even when they don't show any further interest in the things of Christ. By the Quick Prayerism method a very large percentage of one's "converts" show no evidence of genuine Bible salvation. To our shame, Quick Prayerism has spread widely within the independent Baptist movement, but independent Baptists are not the only ones who use shallow evangelism tactics. A similar approach is used by Campus Crusade and is called the "Four Spiritual Laws." In the 1970s Campus Crusade

sponsored a *Here's Life* crusade in 165 cities across America. By May 1977 at least 60% of the population had been exposed to the massive advertising campaign that featured billboards, radio, television, and newspapers. According to their statistics, roughly 7 million personal contacts were made and nearly 550,000 people "accepted Christ." Yet a follow-up survey of 400 churches that participated in the program in two cities found that of the 6,000 people that had the *Four Spiritual Laws* explained to them by these churches and of the 1,665 people who made a "decision for Christ," only 55 joined a church and 23 of those already had a church background (Richard Quebedeux, *The Worldly Evangelicals*, 1978, p. 58). Those are amazingly pathetic statistics. We don't criticize their grand vision and their zeal for preaching the gospel (assuming, for a moment, that it was the gospel that was preached), but we do object to their unscriptural methods and their tendency to cite salvation statistics

that are absolutely meaningless. God's work must be done in God's way, and He gives the increase as He sees fit, and when He gives the increase it is real and observable and abiding. Biblical evangelism is not salesmanship.

Have You Heard of the  
**Four Spiritual Laws?**



## Conclusion

Friends in Christ, do not be discouraged by any of this. It is God's will that we know the times (1 Ch. 12:32; Mat. 16:3) and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. These things remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the coming of the Lord. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ day by day? "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:11-14). This material is sent only to those who personally subscribe to the Fundamental Baptist Information Service list. To SUBSCRIBE or UNSUBSCRIBE or CHANGE ADDRESSES go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbis/subscribe.html>. Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org). David Cloud is the director of Way of Life Literature and author of the Friday Church News Notes.